(iii) Expediting allotment of captive coal blocks to private and public sector companies in order to enhance coal production.

(iv) 10 million tonnes of coal is offered under E-auction sale during the year 2005-06 to increase availability of coal to the non-linked consumers.

Ferry service between Mumbai and Karachi

†*232. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for starting a passenger-service for the passengers between Mumbai and Karachi through sea route;

(b) whether any discussion has taken place between Governments of both the countries; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU):(a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Unemployed engineering/medical Graduates

*233. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of umemployed engineering and medical graduates in the country with State-wise, break-up;

(b) whether unemployment among technical/medical graduates is on the increase in the recent years; and

(c) the steps taken to reduce unemployment among youths belonging to this category?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SEKHAR RAO): (a) State-wise authentic data on the number of unemployed engineers and medical graduates are not available. However, number of engineers and medical graduates and postgraduates, all of whom are not necessarily unemployed, registered with the employment exchanges as on December, 2003 was of the order of 2.2 lakh and 0.48 lakh respectively.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Estimates of employment & unemployment in the country are obtained through labour force surveys conducted by National Sample Survey Organisation. Last such survey for which results are available pertains to the year 1999-2000. As per these surveys, unemployment rate among educated youth (Age Group 15-29 years) with technical education (those having additional diplomas or certificates in Agriculture, Engineering/ Technology, Medicine, crafts and other subjects) on usual status basis has marginally gone down from around 27.3% in 1993-94 to 23.7% in 1999-2000.

(c) With the economy expected to grow at around 8% per annum and the Government emphasis on development of infrastructure, better health services, emphasis to IT and communication sectors etc., substantial employment opportunities for engineers and medical graduates are likely to be created in the economy.

Launch of new service 'City Post'

*234. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to launch a new service "City Post" aimed at recapturing local market in urban centres;

(b) if so, the modalities worked out so far;

(c) the number of cities identified for this purpose; and

(d) the amount likely to be generated from this service during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (c) Orders have been issued for introduction of "City Post" on an experimental basis in Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh, to develop a next-day-delivery service for local articles, with the facility of an electronic intimation of delivery.

(d) The amount likely to be generated from this experimental measure of "City Post" in Vijaywada during the current year (between introduction and 31.3.2006) is estimated to be Rs. 3 to 4 lakhs.